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The cold coastal water cools and condenses much of the vapor of winds blowing from warmer waters and thus acts much as a mountain range in shutting off moisture from the coast. Uncomfortably low temperatures, much fogginess and cloudiness, especially in the north, prevail in consequence. Rain (drizzle) seldom occurs, for the heating of the air over the land more than offsets the cooling by expansion as the wind rises on the steep coast. Even though the water is coldest in the south (Lüderitz Bay), the air is coldest in the north (Swakopmund). In the south the southerly wind has a shorter transit over the cold water; the wind is more often offshore and therefore hot (heated in part by compression on descending from the interior); and (owing to more land winds) there is less fog and cloud to shut out the sunlight.

CHARLES F. BROOKS

SOILS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES IN RELATION TO AGRICULTURE

H. H. BENNETT. **The Soils and Agriculture of the Southern States.** xviii and 399 pp.; maps, ills., bibliogr., index. The Macmillan Co., New York, 1921. $3.50. 8 x 5½ inches.

The author (a native of North Carolina and a graduate of the university of that state) has been connected with the U. S. Bureau of Soils since 1903, first as a soil mapper and later as "inspector" of the southern division, and has had exceptional opportunities to study the soils of the area treated, which ranges from Delaware, Kentucky, and Kansas to a little west of the Pecos River in New Mexico and Texas, making a little over a million square miles, or about one-third of the United States.

The treatment is geographical throughout. One of the text figures is a small soil province map of the United States, reduced from the large one in Bulletin 96 of the Bureau of Soils (reviewed in *Bull. Amer. Geogr. Soc.*, Vol. 47, 1915, p. 214), and another figure is the same thing for the southeastern states, on a larger scale with slight revisions. Eight provinces are recognized in this area, viz., the coastal plain, the Great Plains, the Piedmont "plateau," the central prairie region (covering approximately the glaciated or northern half of Missouri), the Appalachian mountains and plateaus, the Mississippi bluffs and silt loam uplands, the limestone valleys and uplands, and the stream bottoms and second bottoms. To treat the last (which is mostly in the coastal plain) as a separate province, as has been done by the U. S. Bureau of Soils for several years past, is objectionable from a geographical standpoint on account of the intricacy and discontinuity of such an area, though the wide alluvial area along the Mississippi River may well constitute a separate region within the coastal plain. The advisability of excluding the loess belt on the eastern side of the Mississippi also from the coastal plain is questionable.

The large colored map in the front of the book subdivides the area more minutely into what are essentially natural regions, about forty in number, each characterized by soils which are of similar origin but differ among themselves in color, texture, moisture, etc. This map is very similar to one by the same author in the section of the Atlas of American Agriculture devoted to cotton, published (under the supervision of O. E. Baker) by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in the spring of 1919; except that it covers a somewhat larger area. It is also comparable with one by E. W. Hilgard at the beginning of the fifth volume of the Tenth Census (1884) and with one by E. A. Smith in the Fourth Report of the U. S. Entomological Commission (1885), both of which are soil region maps in colors, covering the "cotton states."

If the map had been larger and the size of the book unlimited, about twice as many regions could have been distinguished; but of course one has to stop somewhere short of mapping the individual soil types (several hundred in number), and Mr. Bennett has used excellent judgment in this respect.

Any one familiar with the territory described can easily suggest modifications of some of the regional boundaries, but that is inevitable as long as no two authorities agree exactly on the classification of animals or plants or geological formations or anything else. The most obvious possibilities of improvement that occur to the reviewer are that the fertile greensand marl belt of northern Delaware and central Maryland should be separated from the more sandy areas nearer the coast; the long-leaf pine country of southern Alabama and Mississippi should be correlated with the "middle coastal plain" of Georgia rather than with the red hills farther inland; and the long-leaf pine area of western Louisiana and eastern Texas should be distinguished from the pineless country farther west. In these cases the soil differences may be chemical rather than physical; but they are significant, nevertheless, not only to vegetation but to population and agriculture. The two "black waxy belts" in Texas, given the same color on the map, differ notably in geology, topography, vegetation, and in almost every other respect.

The 51-page introduction discusses general principles, crops, live stock, fertilizers, etc. The next 270 pages are devoted to descriptions of the eight provinces, with special reference to all their important soil series (each province, according to Bureau of Soils usage, having a different set of soil series, with geographical names) and the agricultural features of each group of soils. The treatment of the coastal plain, which includes about one-third of the area and one-half of the regions mapped by the author, is a little more detailed, its subdivisions being described separately to the extent of nearly a page each.

Two appendixes deal with soil analyses. One gives statistics of the amount of several crops produced in each southeastern state in 1917 or 1918. Another is a condensed bibliography, arranged in no apparent order, with dates and number of pages lacking in every case. The index covers 29 pages.

ROLAND M. HARPER

WILD LIFE IN SOUTHERN FLORIDA

CHARLES T. SIMPSON. **In Lower Florida Wilds.** xv and 404 pp.; maps, ills., index. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1920. $3.50. 8¼ x 5½ in.

Florida, and especially the southern part of the state, on account of its delightful winter climate and the unlikeness of its geographical features to those of the rest of the United States, has attracted millions of visitors from other states in search of pleasure or information or homes, and a considerable proportion of them have recorded their impressions in print. The average book or magazine article about Florida, however, is the work of some one who has spent only a few weeks or months in the state and never wandered far from the beaten paths and in many cases has had his imagination unduly stimulated by the natural wonders encountered. Even William Bartram, whose book of travels through the South (published in 1791) is one of the classics, and whose description of the natural features of Georgia and Alabama is so faithful that his route through those states can be traced with reasonable accuracy, seems to have given his imagination free rein when he came to Florida and described phenomena which it is almost impossible to believe ever existed.

Mr. Simpson's work stands out in refreshing contrast to the mass of irresponsible or sensational gush about Florida. The author was a conchologist in the United States National Museum from 1889 to 1902 and then retired from professional scientific work and built a home a few miles from Miami, where he has resided ever since. In recent years, in spite of his age (past "three score and ten"), he has made many trips with visiting scientists or alone to remote corners of southern Florida and the West Indies, expressly to study the wild life. His book is consequently packed with accurate first-hand information about the plants, animals, Indians, etc., of this most tropical part of the United States; and at the same time it is not a dry scientific treatise but is charmingly written and fully illustrated. A nine-page index helps make the contents accessible.

The area treated has no definite boundaries but is the southern part of the peninsula, say south of latitude 27°, where frost is almost unknown and the flora and fauna are largely West Indian, though including also a considerable proportion of species peculiar to Florida and a few of wide range. It is difficult to summarize in a few words the variety of topics treated, but the book is a valuable record of numerous aspects of Nature and uncivilized mankind that are rapidly disappearing before the devastating rush of modern civilization. (The population of the southern third of Florida has more than trebled in the last twenty years and doubled in the last ten in spite of the World War. Miami, the chief center of constructive—and destructive—activity, had 5,471 inhabitants in the spring of 1910, 15,592 in the summer of 1915, and 29,549 in January, 1920.) There, as elsewhere in this country, the ideals of the new settlers are mainly mercenary, so that the natural beauties are being destroyed at a fearful rate or in a few cases distorted into parks and private estates. Such a book as this, however, may possibly cause a chosen few to pause and ask if it is really worth while to despoil such a unique wonderland for temporary gain.

ROLAND M. HARPER